1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
814 Abipon 814

CHAPTER III.

OF THE PERSONS OF THE ABIPONES, AND THE CONFORMATION OF THEIR BODIES.

142 THE Abipones are well formed, and have handsome faces, much like those of Europeans, except in point of colour, which, though not entirely white, has nothing of the blackness of Negroes and Mulattoes. For that natural whiteness which they have in infancy is somewhat destroyed as they grow up, by the sun, and by the smoke: as nearly the whole of their lives is passed in riding about plains exposed to the beams of the sun, and the short time that they spend in their tents, they keep up a fire on the ground day and night, by the heat and smoke of which they are unavoidably somewhat darkened. Whenever the cold south wind blows, [513] they move the fire to the bed, or place it underneath the hanging net in which they lie, and are thus gradually smoke-dried, like a gammon of bacon in a chimney. The women, when they 142 293 832 ride out into the country, shield their faces from the sun's rays with an umbrella, and are, in consequence, generally fairer than the men, who, more ambitious to be dreaded by their

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
514 Abipon 514

enemies than to be loved, to terrify than attract beholders, think the more they are scarred and sun-burnt, the handsomer they are.

I observed that almost all the Abipones had black but rather small eyes; yet they see more acutely with them, than we do with our larger ones; being able clearly to distinguish such minute, or distant objects as would escape the eye of the most quick-sighted European. Frequently, in travelling, when we saw some animal running at a distance, and were unable to distinguish what it was, an Abipon would declare, without hesitation, whether it was a horse or a mule, and whether the colour was black, white, or grey; and on examining the object more closely, we always found him correct.

Moreover, in symmetry of shape, the Abipones yield to no other nation of America. I scarce remember to have seen one of them with a nose like what we see in the generality of Negroes, flat, crooked, turned up towards the forehead, or broader than it should be. The commonest shape is aquiline; as long and sharp as is consistent with beauty. An hundred deformities and blemishes, common among Europeans, are foreign to them. You never see an Abipon with a hump on his back, a wen, a hare lip, a monstrous belly, bandy legs, club feet, or